

Appl. No. 09/911,149

Amdt. Dated September 27, 2005

Reply to Office Action of August 5, 2005

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the final Office action mailed August 5, 2005. Reexamination and reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully solicited.

Claims 1-8 and 36 remain pending in this application, with Claims 1, 6, and 36 being the independent claims. No claims have been amended, and no new matter is believed to have been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 4, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,845,449 (Carman et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 relates to method of establishing a secure communication channel for information flow between two or more computers communicating via an interconnected computer network, and independent Claim 36 relates to a computer-readable medium containing computer executable code for instructing a computer to carry out the method of independent Claim 1. Independent Claims 1 and 36 each include the steps of receiving a security association data structure from one or more computers via the interconnected computer network, and storing the received security association data structure in a memory region having a specific memory address value associated therewith, and each recites, *inter alia*, assigning the specific memory address value as a security parameter index value associated with the received security association data structure.

Carman et al. relates to a system and method for detecting and correcting errors using an authentication mechanism, and discloses receiving security association (SA) payloads, responding with the lowest number transform that supports the SA, and generating a suite of SAs, one for each common authentication gear between communicants (col. 17, ll. 3-53). Carman et al. further discloses sending a security parameter index (SPI) and SA information to a PF_KEY module for storage in a security policy database (SPD) and a security association database (SAD), respectively (col. 17, ll.

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57-60), and using the SPI to access the SAD to retrieve appropriate authentication gear information (col. 18, ll. 7-56).

According to the final Office action, the latter function noted above, namely using the SPI to access the SAD, allegedly constitutes "assigning the specific memory address value as a security parameter index value associated with the received security association data structure," as is recited in independent Claims 1, 6, and 36. In support of this the Office action states that because Carman et al. teaches that the SPI value is "used to access the SAD," then "the SPI must be the index (address value) associated with the SA." See Office action at 2. Applicants submit, however, that is an erroneous conclusion.

Applicants fully admit in the background of the instant application that "using" the SPI to access the SAD is well-known. Specifically, Applicants fully disclose that the known methodology is to hash the SPI value together with the destination address and security protocol to create a hash key, which is used to hash into the SAD to find a match using a linear search technique. However, Applicants' invention, as is clearly and unambiguously recited in the independent claims, is not directed to a method of merely "using" the SPI value to access the SAD. Applicants claimed method is much more specific in that the assigned SPI value is the specific memory address value in which the associated SA is stored in the SAD. The Examiner cannot point to any location in Carman et al. where this specific feature is disclosed, taught, or even remotely suggested. The only teaching even remotely related to the "use" of the SPI goes no further than the previously mentioned generalized statements of SPI usage.

Based on the generalized statements associated with how the SPI is used, the skilled artisan reading Carman et al. could only conclude that the teaching refers to what was generally known in the art at the time the inventors invented the instant invention. Without the luxury of Applicants' own disclosure a skilled artisan would not have even considered the generalized teaching of "using" the SPI to access the SAD to mean that the SPI is the specific address value in the SAD at which the associated SA is stored.

Hence, Applicants once again submit that Carman et al. fails to disclose, or even remotely suggest, at least the above-noted feature of independent Claims 1 and 36. As

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such, Applicants respectfully request, once again, for reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2, 6, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Carman et al. and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0184487 (Badamo et al.), Claims 3 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Carman et al., Badamo et al., and RFC791, and Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Carman et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,055,236 (Nessett et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As regards independent Claim 6, this claim, similar to independent Claims 1 and 36, recites, *inter alia*, assigning the specific memory address value as a security parameter index value associated with the received security association data structure.

Badamo et al. relates to a network gateway device and method for receiving and transmitting secure data, RFC791 is the DARPA Internet Program Protocol Specification, and Nessett et al. relates to a system and method for locating network services with distributed network address translation. However, none of Badamo et al., RFC791, or Nessett et al. are understood to make up for at least the above-noted deficiency of Carman et al. Namely, none of these citations discloses, or even remotely suggests, assigning the specific memory address value as a security parameter index value associated with the received security association data structure, as recited in independent Claims 1, 6, and 36.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully solicits reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejections.

Conclusion

Based on the above, independent Claims 1, 6, and 36 are patentable over the citations of record. The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable for the reasons given above with respect to the independent claims and because each recite features which are patentable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

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The other art of record is also not understood to disclose or suggest the inventive concept of the present invention as defined by the claims.

This Amendment Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 for at least the following reasons. The amendment overcomes all of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office action. The amendment does not raise new issues requiring further search or consideration. Additionally, the present amendment places the application in better form for appeal, which Applicant fully intends to pursue, if necessary. Therefore, entry and consideration of the present amendment are proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 and are hereby requested.

Hence, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

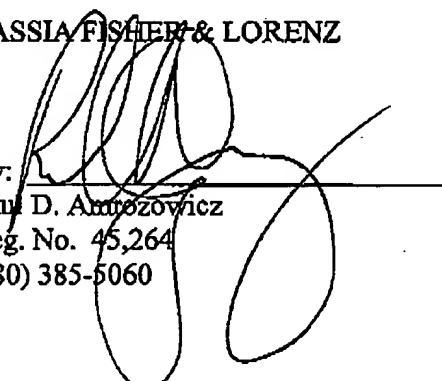
If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

If for some reason Applicant has not paid a sufficient fee for this response, please consider this as authorization to charge Ingrassia, Fisher & Lorenz, Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

INGRASSIA FISHER & LORENZ

Dated: September 27, 2005

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